

FAMILIA

WEEK 2 (HYBRID)

BIG IDEA

In God's family we pray for each other.

Bible

Colossians 1:1-14; I Thessalonians 5:16-18; Philippians 4:6

WHAT?

ACTIVITY | Mood Swing

- Hey, welcome back to our series, *Familia*, where we're talking about our families — the families we were born into as well as the families we choose.
- Every family has difficulties from time to time, and nothing says "bad day" more than an unpredictable mood. If you're like most people, you know what it's like to swing into a bad mood. But hopefully you also know what it's like to swing into a great mood — like when you suddenly hear your favorite jam on the radio.

QUESTION | "What's a song that can always shift your mood?"

- Music can shift our moods in some pretty powerful ways. **What's a song that can always shift your mood? How?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give a few students a chance to respond.*
- It's funny just how much these little things can change our entire mood.
 - Sometimes it's for the better, like when we hear a great song, a friend compliments us, or we get a good grade.
 - But sometimes our moods can shift for the worse when a family member says something that gets under our skin, or does that thing that always annoys us, or turns on the vacuum cleaner when we're trying to take a nap.
- The things that have the power to shift our moods are different for each of us. Especially when it comes to our families, we all have different things that frustrate, annoy, and upset us.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*

- **If you were wearing a mood ring, what color would it be today and why?**
- **What is the mood usually like in your family? What sort of things can shift the mood (for better or worse)?**

ACTIVITY | The Language of Family

- In this series, we're talking about *familia* — that's Spanish for "family," but let's see if we can learn it in a few other languages too.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Open Google Translate on a device of your choice. If possible, mirror that device to your screen so students can see and hear it. Spend a few moments taking requests from your students about which language they want to see "family" translated into. For each translation you choose, play the audio of the pronunciation and practice saying it together. If students request a language you're unfamiliar with, take a moment to look up the countries in which it's spoken.*
- Because "family" is a concept understood in every language, all over the world, it's a reminder that . . .
 - No matter who we are, where we live, what language we speak, or what circumstances we were born into, we all need "family."
 - But every family is different. Just like the world is filled with different words for "family," it's filled with different kinds of families too.
 - Whether "family" for you means the people you live with, the people you're related to, or the people you've chosen to love like family, every family comes with its own joys, challenges, pressures, and quirks.
- If you've ever tried to communicate with someone who speaks a language unfamiliar to you, you know using the right word is critical. Using the right words is important in our families too.

SO WHAT?

STORY | Talk about a time a family member said something that changed your entire mood.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a story from your own life (or ask a volunteer or student to tell a story) about a time a family member said something that changed your entire mood — for better or worse. You might talk about a time a sibling insulted you, or an adult unintentionally said something that hurt or angered you, or a relative's funny comment lightened a tense family moment.*
- If we're honest, so many things can change our mood. A simple word or comment often has the power to change everything, for better or worse.

POLL | "When you're in a bad mood, do you . . . ?"

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have students respond to the following questions by raising their hands or cheering for the responses that apply to them.*
- **When you're with family and you're in a bad mood, do you usually . . .**
 - **Go hide in your room?**
 - **Bottle it up until you eventually explode?**
 - **Find someone to blame?**
 - **Cry?**
 - **Whine and complain until you get your way?**
 - **Argue your way out of it?**

- We all have different ways of dealing with our bad moods. Sometimes we might feel angry and want to scream at someone. Sometimes we might want someone to hurt like we feel hurt. Sometimes we don't know why we react the way we do.
- For some of you, your bad moods might often be a mystery to you. You're not sure why they happen, why you can't control them, or how to snap yourself out of them.
 - If that's you, can I tell you something that might help? At your age, that's really normal. Seriously. It's just how your brain and body are developing right now. So don't be too hard on yourself.
 - But at the same time, we all have to take responsibility for the way we treat each other. You're going to make mistakes (especially when your emotions feel a little out of your control), but what matters is that you learn from it.
- No matter what your attitude is usually like around family, we all affect the atmosphere of our homes with what we say. Our words and our attitudes can dramatically impact what happens in our families.

SCRIPTURE | Colossians 1:1-8

- Today we'll be reading more from Paul, who wrote a lot of the books in the New Testament.
 - We call them "books" today, but in reality they started out as letters written from Paul to some of the earliest followers of Jesus.
 - These letters were filled with wisdom, guidance, and often correction so that Jesus' followers could learn how to follow God more closely.
 - In many of these letters, you see Paul (and other writers) refer to their fellow Jesus-followers as God's "family." While the teaching in these letters is mostly meant to show Christians how to treat each other, there is so much we can (and should!) apply to the way we treat our actual families too.
- Today I want to show you part of a letter Paul wrote to the church in Colossae. The Christians here had once been strong in their faith, but they began to drift away from God, both in their beliefs and their behavior. So Paul intervened to do two things:
 - Remind them about the truth of who Jesus is.
 - Remind them to live like Jesus would want them to live.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Colossians 1:1-8.*
- Watch how Paul used his words when speaking to God's family.
 - He told them (and God) he was thankful for them.
 - He called them "holy" and "faithful," and encouraged them. They weren't perfect, but Paul saw the good in them.
 - He said he was always praying for them.
- Now think about Paul's attitude toward God's family.
 - Even though they had messed up and needed to be corrected, Paul didn't come at them with harsh or angry words. Paul's response was careful, patient, and gracious.
 - I wonder if that's because Paul understood from personal experience just how easy it is to mess up. Before he met Jesus, Paul's whole life had been about destroying Jesus' followers and their movement.
 - When we remember how imperfect we are, it's easier to respond graciously when other people act imperfectly.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
 - **When you're in a bad mood, how do you think that affects your family?**
 - **What are some ways prayer could help change our attitude when we're in a bad mood?**

SCRIPTURE | Colossians 1:9-14

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Colossians 1:9-14.*
- Paul said he had not stopped praying for the church family in Colossae! And Paul didn't put any qualifiers on that statement. He didn't say . . .
 - "We prayed for you when you weren't annoying."
 - "We only prayed for you when you did what we asked you to do."
 - "We prayed for you when we felt like it."
- Paul simply prayed for God's family, no matter what. I wonder what would happen if we decided to do the same for our families.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
 - * **How often do you pray in a typical day? Why don't you think we reach out to God more often?**
 - * **What are your biggest questions or hesitations about prayer?**

SCRIPTURE | I Thessalonians 5:16-18

- The church at Colossae weren't the only people Paul was praying for, or who received his instructions to pray.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read I Thessalonians 5:16-18.*
- Now obviously, we can't be praying 24/7, right? Paul isn't telling us we're never allowed to sleep again so we can pray nonstop. But he is saying we need to make prayer, and praying for each other, a regular and consistent habit.
 - Even when we don't feel like it.
 - Even when we're busy.
 - Even when we're mad.
- Have you ever tried praying for someone when you were mad them? Have you ever tried praying when you were in a bad mood? When we pray, especially when we don't feel like praying, God changes . . .
 - **OUR WORDS.** It's a lot harder to say something horrible to a family member when you've just thanked God them or asked for help being patient with them.
 - **OUR ATTITUDES.** When we use our words to pray and be thankful for our families, it changes us from the inside out. God probably won't miraculously make our siblings less obnoxious or our relatives less hurtful. But when we pray, God gives us the patience and grace we need in the moment.
- It's not easy to control our words or our attitudes when it comes to family. But like Paul shows us, prayer has the power to change both us and our situations. That's why, **in God's family, we pray for each other.**

NOW WHAT?

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may*

want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.

- * **What did you notice about the way Paul prayed for other Jesus-followers? Why did that stand out to you?**
- * **When we pray for our families, who do you think changes most: us, them, or both? Why do you think so?**

RESPONSE | The Daily Prayer Challenge

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before your teaching time, print and assemble the prayer card booklets provided in your downloads. The handout provided is designed to be printed on perforated note cards [like these](#), or printed on card stock and cut into eight equal rectangles. Print one copy for each student and perforate or cut the cards. Assemble the booklets by putting the cover card on top and the daily cards in order behind the cover. Start with whichever day of the week you do your weekly program — the challenge should begin that night. When the cards are in order, hole punch them in the top left corner and string them on a [binder ring](#). Place one booklet under each seat, along with a pen.*
- So what does this look like practically? One way is to simply dedicate this next week to praying for our families every day. It doesn't need to last for hours — it might only be a few moments. The point is that we get into the habit of praying for them. But how?
 - For one week, commit to writing your prayers down for your family.
 - Try writing a quick prayer on the front of that day's card in the morning.
 - Then in the evening, write on the back of the card how praying for your family impacted your words, your attitude, or your family dynamics that day.
- But what should we pray for? There are a lot of ways you could do this, but it's really up to you. You have seven days of the week, starting today. In those seven days, you might . . .
 - **PRAY FOR DIFFERENT FAMILY MEMBERS EACH DAY.** Flip through your booklet right now and write at least one name on each card as a reminder of who you'll pray for each day. You could even ask each person how you can pray for them — and then let them know you did.
 - **PRAY FOR DIFFERENT THINGS EACH DAY.** Maybe you already have things you know you need to pray for, but it's okay if you need a little help. If you look at Paul's letters, you'll see he prayed for a few different things for God's family. Each day this week, try taking the things Paul prayed for and praying one them over your family. Every day, thank God for them. Then you might pray that . . .
 - They would all come to know and love Jesus.
 - God would do great things through them.
 - They would know God's will.
 - God's Spirit would help them look more like Jesus.
 - They'd know God better.
 - They'd find strength in Jesus.
 - They'd be full of joy.
 - **PRAY FOR THE SAME THING EACH DAY.** Or maybe you have one specific thing you want to commit to praying about for your family this week. Maybe it's your attitude, or your family's circumstances, or a big conflict you want to see resolved. If that's true for you, go ahead and pray for it every day!
- Whatever you pray for, the point is to create a personal account for you to look back on of what you prayed for and how God changed things. Because if you make it a habit to pray for your family, things really will change. Every problem may not get solved, but God will change something — including you.

PRAYER

- Let's close things out today by actually doing what we said we should do. Let's pray for our families.
 - There are some of you in this room who get a long pretty well with your families. Sure,

we all get a little angry or mean once in a while, but for the most part, things are pretty okay.

- For others of you, your whole family is struggling right now. Maybe you're mourning a big loss or enduring a really difficult time together.
- And for some of you, "family" is a word you really struggle with because of how your family has hurt you.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Close in a few moments of prayer, allowing students to pray or write silently while music plays.*
- We can all agree no one can make us quite as angry as our own family members. It's so easy to react with frustration, impatience, and cruelty. But this week, I want to challenge you to make prayer your reaction instead.
- It may not come easily at first, but with practice and time, I think you'll see God beginning to change your family in big ways — starting with you. Because **in God's family we pray for each other.**

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
 - **Read Philippians 4:6. What's something that happened at home recently that you should have prayed about? What do you think could have been different if you had talked to God about it?**
 - **This week, how are you going to make it more of a habit to pray for your family?**